is constantly changing. The release of materials into the environment due to the Gulf war is being analysed to see if any adverse consequences could posibly arise. Action will be taken as warranted.

(b) and (d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests has convened inter- Departmental meetings to analyse the environmental impacts of Gulf War on India. Analysis of the oil spill which has occurred so far in the Gulf shows that there may be negligible traces of oil by the time the oil slick reaches Indian waters. The present slick is likely to swell around the Gulf and may move in the open sea westwards in the next two months. Some change in direction may occur eastwards thereafter. 40—50 per cent of oil would have evaporated within 24 hours of the spill. The spills travel roughly at a speed of 20 kms per day and the distance between the oil spill site and our maritime boundary is 2600 kms. The spill will dissipate mostly by the time it reaches our waters. However, there will be formation of tar balls, some of which may reach the Indian Coast. The Coastal States have been alerted to meet the situation which may arise out of the deposition of tar balls. The changing situation in the Gulf is being monitored continuously as also the position of the oil slick and the biological life in our marine waters.

(c) The Government are aware of the views of the environmental experts regarding the effects of oil well fires in the Gulf on the weather patterns. The available data so far and the analysis by our Scientists shows no reason for undue concern. The changing situation, however, is being monitored and action will be taken as necessary.

Refuelling of U. S. aircrafts in India

*78. SHRI KAPIL VERMA:
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) when the decision was taken to allow US military aircrafts to overfly Indian air space and accordingly, to be entitled to refuelling facilitits; at what level this decision was taken; and by whom; what were the terms and conditions stipulated in the agreements, if any; whether any conditions stipulated in regard to inspection or verification; if so, whether any drill or procedure was laid down;

(b) whether the decisions were reviewed either after the adoption of Security Council resolution on November 29, 1990 or after the eruption of war on 17th January, 1991; whether Government are prepared to review it now and suspend the refuelling and the over flights;

(c) the number of U. S. Military aircrafts that have so far been permitted overflights through Indian Air space alongwith the details of aircrafts; the number of those which have been refuelled in Indian airports alongwith the names of the Airports and the dates of such overflights refuelling; and

(d) whether any inspection or physical verification was undertaken of materials being carried by these aircrafts to ascertain the nature of the Cargo being carried?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR): (a) In the present context, permission for overflight of US military aircraft was given in August, 1990, and for transit and refuelling facilities in December, 1990.

(b) With effect from 20th February, 1991, no transit and refuelling has been taking place.

(c) 120 aircraft were given permission for overflights and 136 for transit and refuelling. Refuelling facilities in the present context were given in Bombay, Madras, Agra and Nagpur.

(d) The permission for transit and refuelling of US Air Force transport aircraft was given on the basis of an assurance from the US Government that the aircraft would be used for transporting only non-lethal supplies and for evacuation of personnel on humanitarian, medical and emergency grounds. The Government is satisfied that this assurance has been complied with.